



School of Management

**TECM 702:001 INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS AND TEAMWORK  
SPRING 2006**

**Professor:** Catherine Durnell Cramton, Ph.D.  
**Class Meeting Time:** Saturdays, 1-5 p.m.  
**Class Location:** SUB II, SOM  
**Office:** Enterprise 219  
**Course Website:** Web CT  
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**Office Hours** By appointment  
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**Home Office:** (301) 229-6740 (9 to 5 Mon-Fri after you have tried my office)  
**Fax:** Arrange in advance by telephone or e-mail.

**Course Objectives:**

- To create a learning community within which you develop your ability to work in and manage teams in information technology related industries
- To provide knowledge and opportunities that enable you to refine your interpersonal skills, particularly communication and conflict management skills
- To help you deepen your understanding of the dynamic inter-organizational context in which teamwork in information technology related industries takes place, thereby providing a solid underpinning for your decisions and actions
- To help you refine your ability to observe and analyze team and interpersonal behavior, and choose effective courses of action
- To help you refine your ability to use relevant theory as a tool to organize your thinking and select effective courses of action

**Readings:**

- Thompson, Leigh. 2004. *Making the Team: A Guide for Managers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Other readings contained in binder

**Communication:**

One of the best ways to reach me is via e-mail, which I monitor closely. It is **essential** that you monitor your George Mason University e-mail account regularly or have mail forwarded from that account to the e-mail account that you do monitor. Check to be sure that the forwarding function is operating properly. I will communicate with the class outside of class time by e-mails sent to the GMU class list.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 993-2472. All academic accommodation must be arranged through the DRC.

***Format:***

The success of our work together hinges on our creation of a learning community within which insights from theory and practice contribute to the professional development of all members. To that end, the course incorporates lectures, readings, discussions, role-playing, in-class group work, case analysis, written analysis, self-reflection, and frequent opportunities for feedback. A significant amount of work during class time will be done in learning teams, which will be created at the first class meeting.

***Evaluation:***

Mastering the observational, analytic and application skills represented by the Personal Application Assignments (PAAs) is a central part of the course and of course evaluation. You will be asked to write two PAAs, each approximately seven pages in length and each worth 25% of your final grade. The first one is due Feb. 11 and the second is due March 18. It usually takes people at least eight hours to write a PAA that earns a satisfactory/good grade (i.e. "B"), exclusive of the reading involved. People who write "honors" (i.e. "A") PAAs usually find they devote more time than that. From among the topics examined in the course, PAAs allow you to choose the ones of particular relevance and challenge to you. See the handout materials for hints for writing PAAs and the criteria on which PAAs are graded. I also will provide a number of sample PAAs. PAAs are to be turned in on paper. **I do not accept faxed or emailed PAAs.**

In your work on all written assignments, keep in mind that you may not present as your own the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement. You also may not borrow the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement. In "Suggestions for writing personal application assignments," I describe an abbreviated format that you may use for citing course materials. If you cite materials not assigned in the course, you must include full bibliographic information. This course is conducted in accordance with GMU Honor Code procedures: <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/unilife/honorcode.html>

Plan to turn in your Personal Application Assignments on time. Late papers are strongly discouraged and will be penalized with a one-point deduction (out of 25 points) for a first violation unless you document the existence of extraordinary circumstances. The penalty doubles for a second late paper.

At every other class meeting, we will begin with a quiz on the prior two sessions' material. I will count your best four out of five quizzes toward your final grade. Each quiz will be worth 7.5 points, for a total of 39 points. If circumstances force you to be absent one time during the semester, I will allow one make-up quiz.

Preparation for and participation in your learning team is critical to your learning and your colleagues' learning. Five percent of your grade will be determined by the members of your learning team, including yourself. Each team member will evaluate numerically both his or her own preparation and participation, and the preparation and participation of each of the other

members. All the scores given to you by yourself and your colleagues will be averaged and the average will constitute five percent of your final grade.

You will be given class time on Jan. 14 to begin to develop your learning team and create a team resume and contract. Your team's one-page resume should be turned in on Jan. 21. Your team's contract should be turned in on Feb. 4. On March 18, each team should turn in a 3-4 page summary of its reassessment, including action steps for the future and a rewritten team contract.

### ***Evaluation Summary:***

PAA #1 (due no later than Feb. 11)	25%
PAA #2 (due no later than March 18)	30%
Best four out of five quizzes, 7.5 points each	30%
Learning group preparation and participation (evaluated by peers)	5%
Team resume (due Jan. 21) and team contract (due Feb. 4)	3%
Team reassessment and revised contract (due March 18)	7%

### ***Grading:***

Grades assigned for the course will be A, B, C, or F. No plus or minus grades will be used. An "A" is an honors grade. It means that your work significantly exceeded expectations and was deserving of honor. A "B" is a grade for good to very good performance. It means that you have satisfactorily demonstrated command of the course material. A "C" is a passing grade but indicates that there were some significant flaws in your demonstrated grasp of the material. An "F" is a failing grade.

### ***Course Schedule With Reading Assignments:***

#### ***Jan. 14: Course Introduction***

- Thompson, Chapters 1 and 2
- Thompson, Appendix 3 (pp. 312-314), "Guide for Creating Effective Study Groups"
- Handout: Hints for writing Personal Application Assignments (3 pp.)
- Handout: Criteria for Grading Personal Application Assignments (2 pp.)

#### ***Jan. 21: Communication and Influence***

***Team resume due***

***Quiz on last week's materials***

- Binder: Bradford & Cohen, "Power up: A hands on guide to supportive confrontation"
- Binder: Cannon & Witherspoon, "Actionable feedback"

Optional:

- Binder: Cohen & Bradford, "Influence without authority"
- Binder: Tannen, "The power of talk"

#### ***Jan. 28: Team Building, part 1***

- Thompson, Chapter 4

- Binder: Binder: “Henry Tam and the MGI Team”

***Feb. 4: Team Building, part 2***

***Team contract due***

***Quiz on the past two weeks’ materials***

- Thompson, Chapter 5 and pp. 156-169 of Chapter 7
- Binder: Druskat & Wolff: “Building the emotional intelligence of groups”

***Feb. 11: Virtual Collaboration***

***Personal Application Assignment 1 due***

- Binder: Cramton, “Finding common ground in dispersed collaboration”
- Binder: Chinowsky & Rojas: “Virtual teams: Guide to successful implementation”
- Binder: “Leo Burnett Co. Ltd: Virtual team management”

***Feb. 18: The Role of Culture in Collaboration***

***Quiz on the past two weeks’ materials***

- Binder: DiStefano & Maznevski, “Creating value with diverse teams in global management
- Binder: Javidan & House, “Cultural acumen for the global manager”
- Binder: Kirkman et al., “Exporting teams: Enhancing the implementation and effectiveness of work teams in global affiliates”

***Feb. 25: Intergroup Relations and Boundary Management, part 1***

- Thompson, Chapter 9
- Binder: Cross, Davenport and Cantrell, “The social side of performance” (2 pp.)
- Binder: “Managing Xerox’s Multinational Development Center”
- Binder: “John A. Clendenin” (2 pp.)

***March 4: Intergroup Relations and Boundary Management, part 2***

***Quiz on the past two weeks’ materials***

- Thompson, Chapter 11
- Binder: Ancona, Breshman & Kaeufer, “The comparative advantage of X-teams”
- Binder: Cohen & Mankin, “Complex collaborations in the new global economy”
- Binder: Aston Blair case

***Mar. 11: Managing Conflict***

- Binder: Brown, “Managing conflict among groups”
- Binder: Weiss & Hughes, “Want collaboration? Accept—and actively manage—conflict.”
- Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

***March 18: Course Summary***

***Quiz on the past two weeks’ materials***

***Personal Application Assignment 2 due***

***Team reassessment paper and revised team contract due***